

**MADE IN MONTANA PRODUCTION SERVICES, LLC**

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March 29, 2007

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am pleased that you are considering HB 40 amending the Big Sky on the Big Screen Act. I've been working in the film industry for 30 years and have had the opportunity to be part of over 40 films and television shows grossing to date over a billion dollars. As a producer and first assistant director, in the making of these films and TV series, I have traveled to several countries, including Canada, and many states. However, I am extremely privileged and proud to call Montana my home.

My wife and I are full time residents of Gallatin County, where we are constantly reminded of the beauty and grandeur that this state has to offer to film and television production. But beauty and grandeur are not enough when seeking to build a viable film industry. In order to attract the film and TV business; an industry that can help local economies, small businesses, tourism, recent Montana College graduates, and industry professionals living in this state; innovative thinking is required on the part of statewide legislators and the state government to keep up with today's competitive marketplace.

This summer, my wife and I were part of the development and the filming of the feature film, "A Plumm Summer", which was produced in the Bozeman and Livingston areas. In fact, I'm sure some people would say I was the driving force in bringing this 3.5 million dollar film to the state of Montana. If Montana's current incentives were not as good as other states and countries why did I even consider this state as an option for filming this small town story? I live here and it truly upset me that I was scouting in Calgary to shoot another film, a film which was inspired by a true Montana story. The only reason for not picking Montana first and having to investigate other locations for our investors was the lack of more competitive incentives. Since "A Plumm Summer" was a small budget picture every dollar was needed to create a good film. So I persevered, and with the help of many parties, the decision was made to film here in spite of better tax incentives in other states. I also believed we needed to start kicking off some new projects in Montana otherwise the incentives would never be successful. My fight to bring the film here was also based on my knowledge of the filmmaking system; it is a system that likes to repeat its own successes and doesn't often take chances on new ideas or new places. Some type of film had to start it off for other filmmakers to follow, but to have them continue to follow in the future; improvements in the Big Sky on the Big Screen Act are needed.

Sitting at #25 out of the 29 states with incentives, Montana currently can not offer what other states can: a really nice lure that can help both smaller budget films and big budget pictures. And be aware that the money saved through the tax incentives is often spent right back in the state to help "put more money on the screen". Isn't it too bad, that Montana was on the bottom of the list as a location for this Montana story? Let's not make it so hard to convince investors our state should be at the top of the list.

It is true, our state offers a good crew base, wonderful support and hospitality, and a wealth of natural beauty, but these elements can only be kept in play by our legislation making a daring move and creating a better lure. I certainly don't expect other industry professionals in Montana to react the same way I did when scouting location – most people get upset and walk away. Be proactive, attract industry professionals to consider Montana, make the best lure you can to catch both the smaller and bigger budgeted films. I am just still learning about fly fishing but it seems to me one of the most important lessons ones learns is that it takes the right fly and the skill to manipulate it to end up with a fish on your line. Incentives should be considered one of the keys to keeping Montana film and TV industry professionals working, tourism flourishing, college graduates staying in Montana, and small business benefiting from millions of dollars being spent locally.

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You will probably read many more testimonials from people who will state more eloquently why we need incentives and many testimonials that will give you numbers and the sound logic and financial benefits behind these incentives. All I can say is - we are big state, let's get big with our incentives. Let's not focus on what was made here in the past but focus on what can be made here now. I know I'd prefer to make movies in my home state. I also promise, as a filmmaker and businessman, to do all I can to help bring film opportunities and business here. In closing, this bill should not be considered a Democratic or Republican bill but a bill that helps the state with increased revenues for small business and the working people of Montana.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Douglas C. Metzger  
3170 Two Moons Road  
Big Sky, MT

"Great discoveries and improvements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds."  
-Alexander Graham Bell